[1] Introduction

[3] La Guajira Peninsula is situated between 12°-28'-30" and 10°-56' north latitude and 1°-11' and 3° east longitude, taking as a base the meridian of Bogotá. It occupies the northeastern part of Colombia and the most northernmost part of the South American continent. Its boundaries can be defined as follows: on the north and west the Caribbean Sea, on the east Lake Maracaibo, and on the south the department of Magdalena and the neighboring republic of Venezuela. In other words, the Caribbean Sea, Lake Maracaibo, the Río Hacha, and the arroyo Paraguaichón serve as natural boundaries. Part of this peninsula belongs to the republic of Colombia and part, the smaller area, to Venezuela.

[3] Its general geological formation appears to be due to the elevation of marine strata, since fossils of sea fauna are found in the subsoil. Its soil is composed of clay, sand, and calcareous strata on the plains, the higher parts belonging to a more ancient formation composed of volcanic rocks, crystalline slate, granite, [5] marble, and jasper, covered by layers of limestone. The predominating minerals are: gypsum, carbonate of lime, argonite, mica, iron ores, and some outcroppings of lignite which have not been exploited up to the present time.

[3] La Guajira proper, as a natural geographical region, starts in the west with the last spurs of the Montes de Oca, a continuation of the Cordillera Oriental in Colombia which crosses the Sierra de Perijá and Serranía de los Motilones, mountains whose beneficial influence is felt in the zones of Carraipía and Paraguaichón. But the characteristic relief starts in the southwestern neck and is composed of isolated ridges of mountains whose general orientation is northwest-southeast, running from west to east and known by the names of Cojoro, Jarara, and Macuira. The last has the [2] highest altitude in La Guajira, 857 meters above sea level, according to Ernst (1), and runs out between Jipuaipolu and Parajimaní on the

[11]

1. Cited by Pichón in Geografía de la Península Guajira [Geography of La Guajira Peninsula].

eastern coast of the peninsula.

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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An Exploration of the Goajira Peninsula, U.S. of Colombia.

By F. A. Simons.

Map, p. 840.

Since the publication of my last paper on the Sierra Nevada in 1881,* I have been commissioned by the National Government of Colombia to survey the two Atlantic States of the Magdalena and Bolivar, and especially to write a report on the hitherto unexplored region of the Goajira Indians. A summary of this I have now the honour of laying before the Royal Geographical Society.

The north-easterly corner of the United States of Colombia (formerly New Granada) terminates in a large peninsula, that, projecting for some 120 miles out into the Caribbean Sea, forms the extensive Gulf of Maracaybo. This peninsula is known as the Goajira. It was ceded by the State of Magdalena in 1872, to form a National Territory, for the better civilisation of its Indians. One half of it, however, is claimed by the Venezuelans, and a dispute that at one time threatened to culminate in war between the two nations, was amicably settled by referring the question to the King of Spain as arbitrator. His decision has not yet been made public. Three-fourths surrounded by sea, the Goajira is on the land, or south-westerly, side separated from the State of the Magdalena by a natural boundary, formed partly by the Rio Ranchería, with the outlying hills of the Nevada, variously called in old maps Cerros de Soldado, de Barrancas, &c., and partly by the Montes of Oca.

Very little or nothing is known of the history of these Indians. Although the peninsula played an important part in the first discoveries, none of the early chroniclers seem to have paid much attention to the country. Juan de Castellanos, who resided some time at the Cabo de la Vela, dedicates a "solo canto" to the pearls. The "Floresta de Santa Marta," written by José Nicolas de la Rosa in 1739, gives many interesting data on the customs and manners of the Indians; this work must have supplied the more recent writings on the subject, for the same errors run through them all. That the present race are not the original inhabitants of the peninsula is certain. The Indians themselves have a legend that they came from a great distance, and are able to point out traces of villages belonging to the former inhabitants, whom they assert are the Arhuacos of the Sierra Nevada. Sometimes their old graves are accidentally come across, yielding to the fortunate finder a rich harvest of *tumas* (pieces of polished stone with a hole drilled through), curiously shaped pieces of gold, and other ornaments (clay), identical with those found in great profusion all over the Sierra Nevada. Now,

* 'Proceedings R. G. S.,' 1881, p. 703.

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
SC13 Goajiro SC13

PRIMITIVE MAN
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ASPECTS OF THE AVUNCULATE IN THE GUAJIRO CULTURE

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THE Guajira peninsula is situated in the northwest corner of Colombia, South America, roughly between the 71° and 73° W. long., and 11° and 12° N. lat. It is rather flat in contour with only some hill ranges in the eastern part. Rainfall is scarce and the vegetation is of a semi-arid type. The region is inhabited by one tribe of Indians, the Arawak-speaking Guajiro. Both culturally and linguistically the Guajira peninsula presents a uniform block.

The present writer visited the territory in the summer of 1940, but due to illness contracted there was forced to cut short his visit. Fairly full data were gathered on all phases of social culture. The present paper deals with certain aspects of one phase only, the avunculate.

The rôle of the maternal uncle is manifold in Guajiro culture, organized as the Guajiro are into maternal sibs. Types of behavior, both prescribed and unformalized, vary, depending on the seniority of both uncle and nephew, but not on that of nieve. In this paper we shall be concerned for the most part with the prescribed and voluntary relations between the eldest brother of a given woman and her eldest son, and between this eldest brother and his sisters' daughters. Other relations not involving those specified kin will be touched upon only incidentally for illustrative purposes.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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numerous and worse armed companies and take what they have. The various bands, however, have no mutual respect or consideration, but will plunder each other if they can. Perhaps a Guajiro with a relation among the attackers can count on some consideration, unless his relative is inimical. However, the Guajiro do sometimes do business with the Cusina, and also can negotiate and secure the return of stolen animals. The Cusina's haunt is the Cojoro Hills and a narrow strip of the lowland is also accounted theirs.' He then named the leaders of that time and told where they and their men were. In those days the Cusina had a number of plantations in the lowland, and also cattle, though they could not be bothered to look after these, but preferred to live by banditry. Simmons also says that it was the Cusina who sold the poisoned arrows.

Nearly forty years had passed since Simmons had journeyed in those parts and it was obvious that the Cusina were no longer so numerous nor so dominant, though one still had to take heed of them and be on one's guard. We were to learn that they could still make daring raids to parts far from their haunts. All unattached Indians one met in the vicinity of the hills were held to be Cusina—it was safest so.

Attack and highway robbery was one thing, ordinary theft another. If a thief was caught, it cost him dear in compensation, but theft itself, as we heard in connection with Chinca, was almost regarded as a sport. It was thus common for poor Indians at least to pinch things from those who were better off. We, of course, were considered very rich.

It was not to be wondered at if an Indian, having nothing to eat during the worst of the drought, appropriated a bit of this and that from those who were better off. If he knew that he would be able to repay it, it became a sort of loan, without the owner's permission.

Once, some Indians got in ahead of the monks when the time came to harvest the manioc at the mission's plantation in Macuira. When the monks came there with the mission's children to carry it home, all had gone. In the hope of preventing this happening again, the monks decided to com-

ATLANTIC OCEAN
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BRASIL
PERU
COLOMB
[Fold Map (A)]
MAGDALENA
SCALE

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

THE GOAJIRO

By JOHN M. ARMSTRONG AND ALFRED MÉTRAUX

THE REGION

The Goajira Peninsula, projecting as part of Colombia northward into the Caribbean Sea, contains an area of about 5,000 square miles, bordered on the east by the Gulf of Venezuela. The broad level plain known as Lower Goajira occupies the base of the peninsula, while the northern extremity is known as Upper Goajira and is characterized by three distinct ranges of hills. These hills have a maximum height of 2,600 feet (about 780 m.) and are separated from each other by two broad plains which run from sea to sea. The country is dry and infertile, the vegetation consisting of divi-divi, cactus, pricklypear, and other xerophitic plants. Even these are absent where bare rock and stone slides preclude vegetation. Rivers are almost nonexistent, the country being cut in all directions by shallow, dry, sandy water courses which drain off rain as it falls. In the south and west, on the treeless prairies or savannas, the land is more hospitable. Here the Indians do most of their stock raising.

LOCATION AND HISTORY

The pastoral *Goajiro* who inhabit this peninsula (map 6) differ profoundly from the agricultural forest-dwelling *Motilones* and *Arhuaco* to the south. Juan de Castellanos, in his "Elegias de los Varones Ilustres" (1874), is the first to allude to these Indians, though he calls them *Corina*. He states that in his time, about 1550, cattle were already abundant in the area. It seems that the adoption of pastoral life by the *Goajiro* took place soon after the Spanish settlement of that part of the continent. The name *Goajiro* was, however, already known in the 16th century and was applied first by Pedro Simón (1882–92). The first reliable ethnographic information about the *Goajiro* goes back to José Nicolás de la Rosa (Nicholás, 1901) and Antonio Julián, who both visited these Indians in the 18th century. Jahn (1927, pp. 119–136) has gathered the few data concerning the *Goajiro* which he found in the early literature. A short summary of the first description of these Indians is given by Hernández de Alba (1936, pp. 8–12).

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

ACQUIRING STATUS IN GUAJIRO SOCIETY

ANTONIO SANTA CRUZ
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The present paper is based upon field research carried out during a 26-day trip in the months of August and September 1958.[1] The writer had previously visited the Colombia part of the Guajira Peninsula in 1940 as a graduate student of anthropology.

The Guajira Peninsula occupies the north-central part of South America and lies between the countries of Colombia and Venezuela. Roughly speaking, about three-fourths of the peninsula belong to Colombia, while only one-fourth is within the boundaries of Venezuela. Ecologically and ethnographically, however, the peninsula is an unbroken block, occupied mainly by the Arawak-speaking Guajiro Indians. There are no attempts on the part of either Government to hold the Indians within the national territory and as, the frontier is practically unwatched, the natives go back and forth across the boundary much as they please.

The primary aim of the 1958 field trip was to find, if possible, a proper locale in which to establish, for the first time in Venezuela, a Pilot Center of Fundamental Education following the patterns—with the necessary modifications for local adaptation—already in practice in countries such as India, Mexico, Peru, etc. The Comisión Indigenista, a branch of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Venezuela, of which the present writer was a member of its technical staff at the time of the field trip, has, at present, elaborate and extensive plans to develop Fundamental Education in Venezuela, thanks to the untiring efforts of its Technical Advisor, Dr. Walter Dupouy. The aim is to bring, ultimately, all of the 100,000 indigenous inhabitants of the country into its national life.

Although major attention was given to the primary aim of the field trip, some time was left for pure research. This was aided by the fact that the present writer was in constant company of

[1] Although no direct quotations have been made from the literature, earlier works have been consulted for both historical and present-day ethnographical data.

10:Gusinde--1 E-5 (1954) 1961 SC13 Goajiro SC13

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Contents:

1. Earlier Reports

2. Most Recent Reports

3. Concluding Remarks

In the middle of 1954 I set out from Caracas via Maracaibo to make anthropological observations in the settlement area of the Yupa Indians (1). In the narrow stretch of Venezuelan

1. M. Gusinde, "The Yupa Indians in Western Venezuela," Proceed. Americ. Philos. Soc., 100, 1956, pp. 197-222.

territory along the western shore of the Gulf of Maracaibo /Gulf of Venezuela/ I occasionally saw representatives of the Guajiro /Goajiro/ people (2) of every age and both sexes. It

2. The spelling Guajiro is preferred to Goajiro. Cf. "Etimología de la palabra 'Guajira /Etymology of the word Guajiro'/" in Vegamian, pp. 11-33.

was my wish to see personally the astonishingly favorable adaptation of these Indians to their unusually dry and vegetation-poor surroundings, in order to compare their ecological conditions with those of the Bushmen in the Kalahari of South Africa (3). Already from Bogotá on, Professor Adolf Staffe of

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10rGuinde--9 E-5 (1954) 1981 SC13 Goajiro SC13

Survey of the Clans of the Guajiro

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around the world simultaneously with the domestic animals themselves.

The branding described was probably learned by the Indians from the Spaniards themselves, simultaneously with the adoption of the first European domestic animals, and has been retained since then. It is all the more surprising that the branding iron (hierro) appears in an old myth which for its part clearly states where the customary individual clan-sign came from. The following version (according to V. Gutiérrez, p. 168) is common in the northern part of the peninsula:

Not far from Nazareth (10) a hill rises behind Itojoro.

10. This post lies only several kilometers south of Puerto Estrella and is actually a small Catholic mission station. Cf. Stutzer, pp. 131 ff., and Barranquilla, pp. 151 ff.

Here, under an oil tree, Mareiwa (11) came into the world.

11. That is the spelling of this mythological name that I felt to be correct, as did V. Gutiérrez (p. 168). Chaves (1946, p. 307) explains in the myth concerning "Las Serranías de la Guajira," among other things: "Mareigua [is] one of the principal deities of the Guajiro people, who with his supernatural power converts persons into hills, separates the